

GOLDEN DEEDS

A Selection from
Charlotte Yonge's
"Book of Golden Deeds"



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS

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"Floreat Etona." (Battle of Laing's Neck.)

*(From an Engraving after Lady Butler. By permission of
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An eye-witness of the attack on Laing's Neck thus describes the incident depicted:—"Poor Elwes fell among the 58th. He shouted to another Eton boy (adjutant of the 58th, whose horse had been shot), 'Come along, Monck! Floreat Etona! We must be in the front rank!' And he was shot immediately."

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A BOOK OF GOLDEN DEEDS.

I.

WHAT IS A GOLDEN DEED?

WE all of us enjoy a story of battle and adventure. Some of us delight in the anxiety and excitement with which we watch the various strange predicaments, hairbreadth escapes, and ingenious contrivances that are presented to us; and the mere imaginary dread of the dangers thus depicted stirs our feelings and makes us feel eager and full of suspense.

This taste, though it is the first step above

the dullness that cannot be interested in anything beyond its own immediate world, nor care for what it neither sees, touches, tastes, nor puts to any present use, is still the lowest form that such a liking can take. It may be no better than a love of reading about murders in the newspaper, just for the sake of a sort of startled sensation ; and it is a state that becomes unwholesome when it absolutely delights in dwelling on horrors and cruelties for their own sake, or upon shifty, cunning, dishonest stratagems and devices. To learn to take interest in what is evil is always mischievous.

But there is an element in many of such scenes of woe and violence that may well account for our interest in them. It is that which makes the eye gleam and the heart throb, and bears us through the details of suffering, bloodshed, and even barbarity—

feeling our spirits moved and elevated by contemplating the courage and endurance that they have called forth. Nay, such is the charm of brilliant valour, that we often are tempted to forget the injustice of the cause that may have called forth the actions that delight us. And this enthusiasm is often united with the utmost tenderness of heart, the very appreciation of suffering only quickening the sense of the heroism that risked the utmost, till the young and ardent learn absolutely to look upon danger as an occasion for evincing the highest qualities.



“O Life, without thy chequered scene
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,
Success and failure, could a ground
For magnanimity be found?”

The true cause of such enjoyment is perhaps an inherent consciousness that there is nothing so noble as forgetfulness of self. Therefore it is that we are struck by hearing of the exposure of life and limb to the utmost peril, in oblivion, or recklessness of personal safety, in comparison with a higher object.

That object is sometimes unworthy. In the lowest form of courage it is only avoidance of disgrace; but even fear of shame is better than mere love of bodily ease, and from that lowest motive the scale rises to the most noble and precious actions of which human nature is capable—the truly golden and priceless deeds that are the jewels of history, the salt of life.

And it is a chain of Golden Deeds that we seek to lay before our readers; but ere entering upon them, perhaps we had better clearly

understand what it is that to our mind constitutes a Golden Deed.

It is not mere hardihood. There was plenty of hardihood in Pizarro when he led his men through terrible hardships to attack the empire of Peru, but he was actuated by mere greediness for gain, and all the perils he so resolutely endured could not make his courage admirable. It was nothing but insensibility to danger, when set against the wealth and power that he coveted, and to which he sacrificed thousands of helpless Peruvians. Daring for the sake of plunder has been found in every robber, every pirate, and too often in all the lower grade of warriors, from the savage plunderer of a besieged town up to



the reckless monarch making war to feed his own ambition.

There is a courage that breaks out in bravado, the exuberance of high spirits, delighting in defying peril for its own sake, not indeed producing deeds which deserve to be called golden, but which, from their heedless grace, their desperation, and absence of all base motives—except perhaps vanity—have an undeniable charm about them, even when we doubt the right of exposing a life in mere gaiety of heart.

Such was the gallantry of the Spanish knight who, while Fernando and Isabel lay before the Moorish city of Granada, galloped out of the camp, in full view of besiegers and besieged, and fastened to the gate of the city with his dagger a copy of the Ave Maria. It was a wildly brave action, and yet not without service in showing the

dauntless spirit of the Christian army. But the same can hardly be said of the daring shown by the Emperor Maximilian when he displayed himself to the citizens of Ulm upon the topmost pinnacle of their cathedral spire ; or of Alonso de Ojeda, who figured in like manner upon the tower of the Spanish cathedral. The same daring afterwards carried him in the track of Columbus, and there he stained his name with the usual blots of rapacity and cruelty. These deeds, if not tinsel, were little better than gold leaf.

A Golden Deed must be something more than mere display of fearlessness. Grave and resolute fulfilment of duty is required to give it the true weight. Such duty kept the sentinel at his post at the gate of Pompeii, even when the stifling dust of ashes came thicker and thicker from the volcano, and the



liquid mud streamed down, and the people fled and struggled on, and still the sentry stood at his post, unflinching, till death had stiffened his limbs; and his bones, in their helmet and breastplate, with the hand still raised to keep the suffocating dust from mouth and nose, have remained even till our own times to show how a Roman soldier did his duty. In like manner the last of the old Spanish infantry originally formed by the Great Captain, Gonzalo de Cordova, were all cut off, standing fast to a man, at the battle of Rocroy, in 1643, not one man breaking his rank. The whole regiment was found lying in regular order upon the field of battle, with their colonel, the old Count de Fuentes, at their head, expiring in a chair, in which he had been carried, because he was too infirm to walk, to this his twentieth battle. The conqueror, the



The Baptism of Clovis.

*(From a study by Gilbert James, after the painting by
Joseph Flax, in the Pantheon, Paris.)*

high-spirited young Duke d'Enghien, afterwards Prince of Condé, exclaimed, "Were I not a victor, I should have wished thus to die!" and preserved the chair among the relics of the bravest of his own fellow-countrymen.

Such obedience at all costs and all risks is, however, the very essence of a soldier's life. An army could not exist without it, a ship could not sail without it, and millions upon millions of those whose "bones are dust and good swords are rust" have shown such resolution. It is the solid material, but it has hardly the exceptional brightness, of a Golden Deed.

And yet perhaps it is one of the most remarkable characteristics of a Golden Deed that the doer of it is certain to feel it merely a duty : "I have done that which it was my duty to do" is the natural answer of those

capable of such actions. They have been constrained to them by duty, or by pity; have never even deemed it possible to act otherwise, and did not once think of themselves in the matter at all.

For the true metal of a Golden Deed is self-devotion. Selfishness is the dross and alloy that gives the unsound ring to many an act that has been called glorious. And, on the other hand, it is not only the valour which meets a thousand enemies upon the battlefield, or scales the walls in a forlorn hope, that is of true gold. It may be, but often it is mere greed of fame, fear of shame, or lust of plunder. No, it is the spirit that gives itself for others—the temper that for the sake of religion, of country, of duty, of kindred—nay, of pity even to a stranger—will dare all things, risk all things, endure all things, meet death in one moment, or

wear life away in slow, persevering tendance and suffering.

Such a spirit was shown by Leæna, the Athenian woman at whose house the overthrow of the tyranny of the Pisistratids was concerted, and who, when seized and put to the torture that she might disclose the secrets of the conspirators, fearing that the weakness of her frame might overpower her resolution, actually bit off her tongue, that she might be unable to betray the trust placed in her. The Athenians commemorated her truly golden silence by raising in her honour the statue of a lioness without a tongue, in allusion to her name, which signifies a lioness.




Again, Rome had a tradition of a lady whose mother was in prison under sentence

of death by hunger, but who, at the peril of her own life, visited her daily, and fed her from her own bosom, until even the stern senate were moved with pity, and granted a pardon. The same story is told of a Greek lady, called Euphrasia, who thus nourished her father ; and in Scotland, in 1401, when the unhappy heir of the kingdom, David, Duke of Rothesay, had been thrown into the dungeon of Falkland Castle by his barbarous uncle, the Duke of Albany, there to be starved to death, his only helper was one poor peasant woman, who, undeterred by fear of the savage men that guarded the castle, crept, at every safe opportunity, to the grated window on a level with the ground, and dropped cakes through it to the prisoner, while she allayed his thirst from her own breast through a pipe. Alas !



the visits were detected, and the Christian prince had less mercy than the heathen senate. Another woman, in 1450, when Sir Gilles of Brittany was savagely imprisoned and starved in much the same manner by his brother, Duke François, sustained him for several days by bringing wheat in her veil, and dropping it through the grated window ; and when poison had been used to hasten his death, she brought a priest to the grating to enable him to make his peace with Heaven. Tender pity made these women venture all things ; and surely their doings were full of the gold of love.

So again two Swiss lads, whose father was dangerously ill, found that they could by no means procure the needful medicine, except at a price far beyond their means, and heard that an English traveller had offered a large



price for a couple of eaglets. The only eyrie was on a crag supposed to be so inaccessible that no one ventured to attempt it, till these boys, in their intense anxiety for their father, dared the fearful danger, scaled the precipice, captured the birds, and safely conveyed them to the traveller. Truly this was a deed of gold.

Such was the action of the Russian servant whose master's carriage was pursued by wolves, and who sprang out among the beasts, sacrificing his own life willingly to slake their fury for a few minutes, in order that the horses might be untouched, and convey his master to a place of safety. But his act of self-devotion has been so beautifully expanded in the story of "Eric's Grave," in "Tales of Christian Heroism," that we can only hint at it, as

at that of "the Helmsman of Lake Erie," who, with the steamer on fire around him, held fast by the wheel in the very jaws of the flame, so as to guide the vessel into harbour, and save the many lives within her, at the cost of his own fearful agony, while slowly scorched by the flames.

Memorable, too, was the compassion that kept Dr. Thompson upon the battlefield of the Alma, all alone throughout the night, striving to alleviate the sufferings and attend to the wants, not of our own wounded, but of the enemy, some of whom, if they were not sorely belied, had been known to requite a friendly act of assistance with a pistol-shot. Thus to remain in the darkness, on a battlefield in an enemy's country, among the enemy themselves, all for pity and mercy's sake, was one of the noblest acts that history can show. Yet it was paralleled in the time

of the Indian Mutiny, when every English man and woman was flying from the rage of the Sepoys at Benares, and Dr. Hay alone remained, because he would not desert the patients in the hospital, whose life depended on his care—many of them of those very natives corps who were advancing to massacre him. This was the Roman sentry's firmness, more voluntary and more glorious.



Nor may we pass by her who first showed how woman's ministrations of mercy may be carried on, not only within the city, but on the borders of the camp itself—"the lady with the lamp," whose health and strength were freely devoted to the holy work of softening the after sufferings that render war so hideous; whose very step and shadow carried gladness

and healing to the sick soldier, and who has opened a path of like shining light to many another woman who only needed to be shown the way. Fitly, indeed, may the figure of Florence Nightingale be shadowed forth at the opening of our roll of Golden Deeds.

Thanks be to God, there is enough of His own spirit of love abroad in the earth to make Golden Deeds of no such rare occurrence, but that they are of "all time." Even heathen days were not without them, and how much more should they not abound after the words have been spoken, "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend," and after the one Great Deed has been wrought that has consecrated all other deeds of self-sacrifice. Of martyrdoms we have scarcely spoken. They were truly deeds of the purest gold; but they are too numerous to be dwelt on

here ; and even as soldiers deem it each man's simple duty to face death unhesitatingly, so "the glorious army of martyrs" had, for the most part, joined the Church with the expectation that they should have to confess the faith, and confront the extremity of death and torture for it.

What have been here brought together are chiefly cases of self-devotion that stand out remarkably, either from their hopelessness, their courage, or their patience, varying with the character of their age ; but with that one essential distinction in all, that the dross of self was cast away.

Among these we cannot forbear mentioning the poor American soldier, who, grievously wounded, had just been laid in the middle bed, by far the most comfortable of the three tier of berths in the ship's cabin in which the wounded were to be conveyed

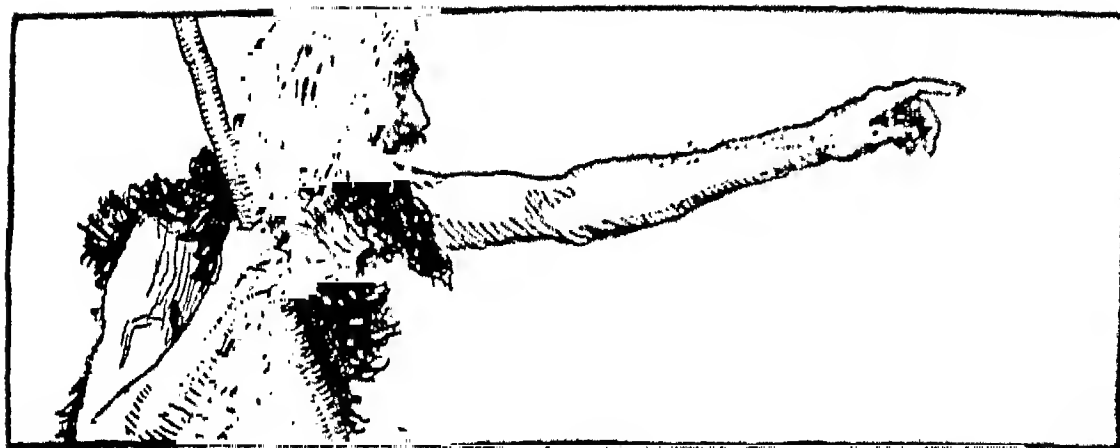
to New York. Still thrilling with the suffering of being carried from the field and lifted to his place, he saw a comrade in even worse plight brought in ; and thinking of the pain it must cost his fellow-soldier to be raised to the bed above him, he surprised his kind lady nurses (daily scatterers of Golden Deeds) by saying, "Put me up there ; I reckon I'll bear hoisting better than he will."

And even as we write, we hear of an American railway collision that befell a train on the way to Elmira with prisoners. The engineer, whose name was William Ingram, might have leapt off and saved himself before the shock ; but he remained in order to reverse the engine, though with certain death staring him in the face. He was buried in the wreck of the meeting train, and when found, his back was against the

boiler — he was jammed in, unable to move, and actually being burnt to death ; but even in that extremity of anguish he called out to those who came round to help him to keep away, as he expected the boiler would burst. They disregarded the generous cry, and used every effort to extricate him, but could not succeed until after his sufferings had ended in death.

While men and women still exist who will thus suffer and thus die, losing themselves in the thought of others, surely the many forms of woe and misery with which this earth is spread do but give occasions of working out some of the highest and best qualities of which mankind are capable. And oh, young readers, if your hearts burn within you as you read of these various forms of the truest and deepest glory, and you long for time and place to act in the

like devoted way, bethink yourselves that the alloy of such actions is to be constantly worked away in daily life ; and that if ever it be your lot to do a Golden Deed, it will probably be in unconsciousness that you are doing anything extraordinary, and that the whole impulse will consist in the having absolutely forgotten self.



II.

WITHSTANDING THE MONARCH IN HIS WRATH.

389 A.D.

WHEN a monarch's power is unchecked by his people, there is only One to whom he believes himself accountable ; and if he have forgotten the dagger of Damocles, or if he be too high-spirited to regard it, then that Higher One alone can restrain his actions. And there have been times when princes have so broken the bounds of right that no hope remains of recalling them to their duty save by the voice of the ministers of

God upon earth. But as these ministers bear no charmed life, and are subjects themselves of the prince, such rebukes have been given at the utmost risk of liberty and life.

Thus it was that though Nathan, unharmed, showed David his sin, and Elijah, the wondrous prophet of Gilead, was protected from Jezebel's fury, when he denounced her and her husband Ahab for the idolatry of Baal and the murder of Naboth, yet no Divine hand interposed to shield Zachariah, the son of Jehoiada, the high priest, when he rebuked the apostasy of his cousin Jehoash, King of Judah, and was stoned to death by the ungrateful king's command in that very temple court where Jehoiada and his armed Levites had encountered the savage usurping Athaliah, and won back the kingdom for the child Jehoash. And when, "in the spirit and

power of Elijah," St. John the Baptist denounced the sin of Herod Antipas in marrying his brother Philip's wife, he bore the consequences to the utmost, when thrown into prison and then beheaded to gratify the rage of the vindictive woman.

Since Scripture saints in the age of miracles were not always shielded from the wrath of kings, Christian bishops could expect no special interposition in their favour when they stood forth to stop the way of the sovereign's passions, and to proclaim that the cause of mercy, purity, and truth is the cause of God.



The first of these Christian bishops was Ambrose, the sainted prelate of Milan. It was indeed a Christian emperor whom he opposed—no other than the great Theodosius—but it was



Ambrose repulsing Theodosius.

(From the painting by Rubens, in Vienna. Photo by Hanfstaengl.)

a new and unheard-of thing for any voice to rebuke an Emperor of Rome, and Theodosius had proved himself a man of violent passions.

The fourth century was a time when races and all sorts of shows were the fashion—nay, literally the rage; for furious quarrels used to arise among the spectators, who took the part of one or other of the competitors, and would call themselves after their colours, the Blues or the Greens. A favourite chariot-driver, who had excelled in these races at Thessalonica, was thrown into prison for some misdemeanour by Botheric, the Governor of Illyria; and his absence so enraged the Thessalonican mob that they rose in tumult, and demanded his restoration. On being refused, they threw such a hail of stones that the governor himself and some of his officers were slain.

Theodosius might well be displeased, but his rage passed all bounds. He was at Milan at the time, and at first Ambrose so worked on his feelings as to make him promise to temper justice with mercy ; but afterwards fresh accounts of the murder, together with the representations of his courtier Rufinus, made him resolve not to relent, and he sent off messengers commanding that there should be a general slaughter of all the race-going Thessalonians, since all were equally guilty of Botheric's death. He took care that his horrible command should be kept a secret from Ambrose, and the first that the Bishop heard of it was the tidings that 7,000 persons had been killed in the theatre, in a massacre lasting three hours !

There was no saving these lives, but Ambrose felt it his duty to make the Emperor feel his sin, in hopes of saving

others. Besides, it was not consistent with the honour of God to receive at His altar a man reeking with innocent blood. The Bishop, however, took time to consider. He went into the country for a few days, and thence wrote a letter to the Emperor, telling him that thus stained with crime he could not be admitted to the Holy Communion, nor received into church. Still the Emperor does not seem to have believed he could be really withstood by any subject, and on Ambrose's return he found the imperial procession, lictors, guards and all, escorting the Emperor as usual to the Basilica, or Justice Hall, that had been turned into a church.

Then to the door came the Bishop and stood in the way, forbidding the entrance, and announcing that there at least sacrilege should not be added to murder.

“Nay,” said the Emperor, “did not holy King David commit both murder and adultery, yet was not he received again ? ”

“If you have sinned like him, repent like him,” answered Ambrose.

Theodosius turned away, troubled. He was great enough not to turn his anger against the Bishop ; he felt that he had sinned, and that the chastisement was merited, and he went back to his palace weeping, and there spent eight months, attending to his duties of state, but too proud to go through the tokens of penitence that the discipline of the church had prescribed before a great sinner could be received back into the congregation of the faithful. Easter was the usual time for reconciling penitents, and Ambrose was not inclined to show any respect of persons, or to excuse the Emperor from a penance

he would have imposed on any offender. However, Rufinus could not believe in such disregard, and thought all would give way to the Emperor's will. Christmas had come, but for one man at Milan there were no hymns, no shouts of "glad tidings," no midnight festival, no rejoicing that "to us a Child is born ; to us a Son is given." The Basilica was thronged with worshippers, and rang with their Amens, resounding like thunder, and their echoing song—the *Te Deum*—then their newest hymn of praise. But the lord of all those multitudes was alone in his palace. He had not shown good will to man ; he had not learnt mercy and peace from the Prince of Peace ; and the door was shut upon him. He was a resolute Spanish Roman, a well-



tried soldier, a man advancing in years ; but he wept, and wept bitterly. Rufinus found him thus weeping. It must have been strange to the courtier that his master did not send his lictors to carry the offending Bishop to a dungeon, and give all his court favour to the heretics, like the last empress who had reigned at Milan. Nay, he might even, like Julian the Apostate, have altogether renounced that Christian faith which could humble an emperor below the poorest of his subjects.

But Rufinus contented himself with urging the Emperor not to remain at home lamenting, but to endeavour again to obtain admission into the church, assuring him that the Bishop would give way. Theodosius replied that he did not expect it, but yielded to the persuasions, and Rufinus hastened on before to warn the Bishop of his coming,

and represented how inexpedient it was to offend him.

“I warn you,” replied Ambrose, “that I shall oppose his entrance ; but if he chooses to turn his power into tyranny, I shall willingly let him slay me.”

The Emperor did not try to enter the church, but sought Ambrose in an adjoining building, where he entreated to be absolved from his sin.

“Beware,” returned the Bishop, “of trampling on the laws of God.”

“I respect them,” said the Emperor, “therefore I have not set foot in the church ; but I pray thee to deliver me from these bonds, and not to close against me the door that the Lord hath opened to all who truly repent.”

“What repentance have you shown for such a sin ? ” asked Ambrose.

“Appoint my penance,” said the Emperor, entirely subdued.

And Ambrose caused him at once to sign a decree that thirty days should always elapse between a sentence of death and its execution. After this, Theodosius was allowed to come into the church, but only to the corner he had shunned all these eight months, till the “dull, hard stone

within him” had “melted,” to the spot appointed for the penitents. There, without his crown, his purple robe, and buskins, worked with golden eagles, all laid aside, he lay prostrate on the stones, repeating the verse, “My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken

me, O Lord, according to Thy word.” This was the place that penitents always occupied,



and there fasts and other discipline were also appointed. When the due course had been gone through, probably at the next Easter, Ambrose, in his Master's name, pronounced the forgiveness of Theodosius, and received him back to the full privileges of a Christian. When we look at the course of many another emperor, and see how easily, where the power was irresponsible, justice became severity, and severity bloodthirstiness, we see what Ambrose dared to meet, and from what he spared Theodosius and all the civilized world under his sway. Who can tell how many innocent lives have been saved by that thirty days' respite?

Pass over nearly seven hundred years, and again we find a church door barred against a monarch. This time it is not under the bright Italian sky, but under the gray fogs of the Baltic Sea. It is not the stately

marble gateway of the Milanese Basilica, but the low-arched, rough stone portal of the newly-built cathedral of Roskilde, in Zealand, where, if a zigzag surrounds the arch, it is a great effort of genius. The Danish king, Swend, the nephew of the well-known Knut, stands before it—a stern and powerful man, fierce and passionate, and with many a Danish axe at his command. Nay, only lately for a few rude jests he caused some of his chief jarls to be slain without a trial. Half the country is still pagan, and though the king himself is baptized, there is no certainty that, if the Christian faith do not suit his taste, he may not join the heathen party and return to the worship of Thor and Tyr, where deeds of blood would be not blameworthy, but a passport to the rude joys of Valhall. Nevertheless there is a pastoral

staff across the doorway, barring the way of the king, and that staff is held against him by an Englishman, William Bishop of Roskilde, the missionary who had converted a great part of Zealand, but who will not accept Christians who have not laid aside their sins.



He confronts the king, who has never been opposed before. “Go back,” he says, “nor dare approach the altar of God—thou who art not a king but a murderer.”

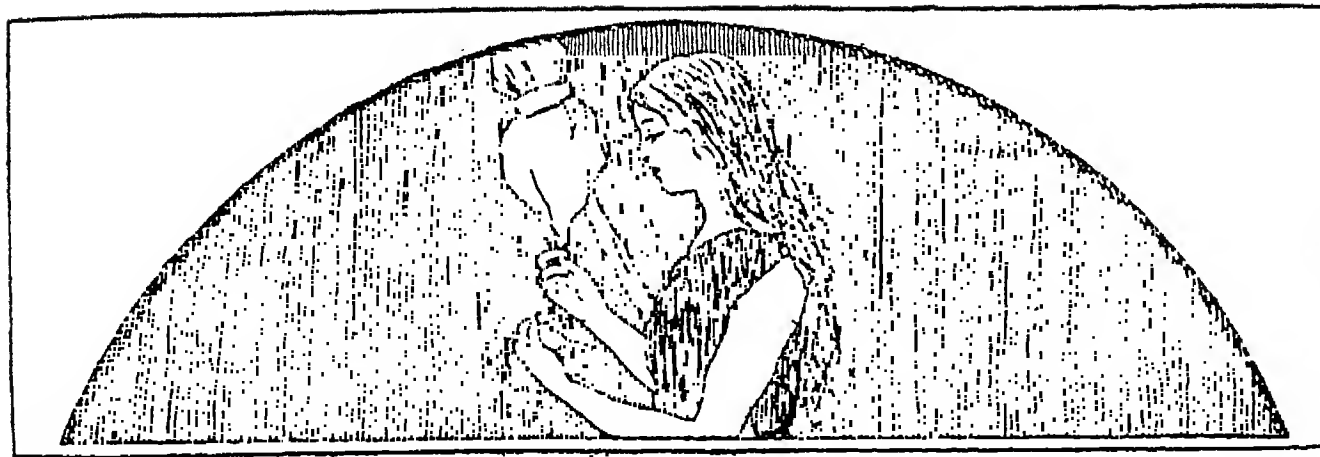
Some of the jarls seized their swords and axes, and were about to strike the bishop away from the threshold ; but he, without removing his staff, bent his head, and bade them strike, saying he was ready to die in the cause of God. But the king came to a better frame of mind. He called the

jarls away, and returning humbly to his palace, took off his royal robes, and came again barefoot and in sackcloth to the church door, where Bishop William met

him, took him by the hand, gave him the kiss of peace, and led him to the penitent's place. After three days he was absolved, and for the rest of his life the bishop and the king lived in the closest friendship—so much so that

William always prayed that even in death he might not be divided from his friend. The prayer was granted. The two died almost at the same time, and were buried together in the cathedral at Roskilde, where the one had taught and the other learnt the great lesson of mercy.





III.

THE SHEPHERD GIRL OF NANTERRE.

438 A.D.

FOUR hundred years of the Roman dominion had entirely tamed the once wild and independent Gauls. Everywhere, except in the moorlands of Brittany, they had become as much like Romans themselves as they could accomplish; they had Latin names, spoke the Latin tongue, all their personages of higher rank were enrolled as Roman citizens, their chief cities were colonies where the laws were administered by magistrates in

the Roman fashion, and the houses, dress, and amusements were the same as those of Italy. The greater part of the towns had been converted to Christianity, though some paganism still lurked in the more remote villages and mountainous districts.

It was upon these civilized Gauls that the terrible attacks came from the wild nations who poured out of the centre and east of Europe. The Franks came over the Rhine and its dependent rivers, and made furious attacks upon the peaceful plains, where the Gauls had long lived in security ; and reports were everywhere heard of villages harried by wild horsemen, with short double-headed battle-axes, and a horrible short pike, covered with iron and with several large hooks, like a gigantic artificial minnow, and like it fastened to a long rope, so that the prey which it had grappled might be pulled up to

the owner. Walled cities usually stopped them, but every farm or villa outside was stripped of its valuables, set on fire, the cattle driven off, and the more healthy inhabitants seized for slaves.

It was during this state of things that a girl was born to a wealthy peasant at the village now called Nanterre, about two miles from Lutetia, which was already a prosperous city, though not as yet so entirely the capital as it was destined to become under the name of Paris. She was christened by an old Gallic name, probably *Gwenfrewi*, or *White Stream*—in Latin *Genovefa*—but she is best known by the late French form of *Geneviève*. When she was about seven years old, two celebrated bishops passed through the village—*Germanus* of *Auxerre*, and *Lupus* of *Troyes*—who had been invited to Britain to dispute the false doctrine of *Pelagius*. All the



inhabitants flocked into the church to see them, pray with them, and receive their blessing ; and here the sweet childish devotion of Geneviève so struck Germanus, that he called her to him, talked to her, made her sit beside him at the feast, gave her his especial blessing, and presented her with a copper medal with a cross engraven upon it. From that time the little maiden always deemed herself especially consecrated to the service of Heaven, but she still remained at home, daily keeping her father's sheep, and spinning their wool as she sat under the trees watching them, but always with a heart full of prayer.

After this St. Germanus proceeded to Britain, and there encouraged his converts to meet the heathen Picts at Maes Garmon, in Flintshire, where the exulting shout of the



St. Geneviève at Prayer.

*(From a study by Gilbert James, after the painting
by Puvis de Chavannes, in the Pantheon, Paris.)*

white-robed catechumens turned to flight the wild superstitious savages of the north, and the Hallelujah victory was gained without a drop of bloodshed. He never lost sight of Geneviève, the little maid whom he had so early distinguished for her piety.

After she lost her parents she went to live with her godmother, and continued the same simple habits, leading a life of sincere devotion and strict self-denial, constant prayer, and much charity to her poorer neighbours.

In the year 451 the whole of Gaul was in the most dreadful state of terror at the advance of Attila, the savage chief of the Huns, who came from the banks of the Danube with a host of savages of hideous features, scarred and



disfigured to render them more frightful. The old enemies, the Goths and the Franks, seemed like friends compared with these formidable beings, whose cruelties were said to be intolerable, and of whom every exaggerated story was told that could add to the horrors of the miserable people who lay in their path. Tidings came that this "Scourge of God," as Attila called himself, had passed the Rhine, destroyed Tongres and Metz, and was in full march for Paris. The whole country was in the utmost terror. Every one seized their most valuable possessions and would have fled; but Geneviève placed herself on the only bridge across the Seine, and argued with them, assuring them, in a strain that was afterwards thought of as prophetic, that, if they would pray, repent, and defend instead of abandoning their homes, God would protect them. They

were at first almost ready to stone her for thus withstanding their panic ; but just then a priest arrived from Auxerre with a present for Geneviève from St. Germanus, and they were thus reminded of the high estimation in which he held her. They became ashamed of their violence, and she led them back to pray and to arm themselves. In a few days they heard that Attila had paused to besiege Orleans, and that Aëtius, the Roman general, hurrying from Italy, had united his troops with those of the Goths and Franks, and given Attila so terrible a defeat at Chalons that the Huns were fairly driven out of Gaul. And here it must be mentioned that when the next year, 452, Attila with his murderous host came down into Italy, and after horrible devastation of all the northern provinces came to the gates of Rome, no one dared to meet him but one venerable

bishop, Leo, the Pope, who, when his flock were in transports of despair, went forth

only accompanied by one magistrate to meet the invader, and endeavour to turn his wrath aside. The savage Huns were struck with awe by the fearless majesty of the unarmed old man. They conducted him safely to Attila, who listened to him with respect, and promised not to lead

his people into Rome, provided a tribute should be paid to him. He then retreated, and, to the joy of all Europe, died on his way back to his native dominions.

But with the Huns the danger and suffering of Europe did not end. The happy state described in the Prophets as “dwelling safely, with none to make them afraid,” was utterly unknown in Europe throughout the



long break-up of the Roman Empire ; and in a few more years the Franks were over-running the banks of the Seine, and actually venturing to lay siege to the Roman walls of Paris itself. The fortifications were strong enough, but hunger began to do the work of the besiegers, and the garrison, unwarlike and untrained, began to despair. But Geneviève's courage and trust never failed ; and finding no warriors willing to run the risk of going beyond the walls to obtain food for the women and children who were perishing around them, this brave shepherdess embarked alone in a little boat, and guiding it down the stream, landed beyond the Frankish camp, and repairing to the different Gallic cities, she implored them to send succour to their famished brethren. She obtained complete success. Probably the Franks had no means of obstructing the passage of the river,

so that a convoy of boats could easily penetrate into the town ; and at any rate they looked upon Geneviève as something sacred and inspired whom they durst not touch—probably as one of the battle-maids in whom their own myths taught them to believe. One account indeed says that, instead of going alone to obtain help, Geneviève placed herself at the head of a forage party, and that the mere sight of her inspired bearing caused them to be allowed to enter and return in safety ; but the boat version seems the more probable, since a single boat on the broad river would more easily elude the enemy than a troop of Gauls pass through their army.



But a city where all the valour resided in one woman could not long hold out, and in another inroad, when Geneviève was absent, Paris was actually seized by the Franks.

Their leader, Hilperik, was absolutely afraid of what the mysteriously brave maiden might do to him, and commanded the gates of the city to be carefully guarded lest she should enter ; but Geneviève learnt that some of the chief citizens were imprisoned, and that Hilperik intended their death, and nothing could withhold her from making an effort in their behalf. The Franks had made up their minds to settle, and not to destroy. They were not burning and slaying indiscriminately, but while despising the Romans, as they called the Gauls, for their cowardice, they were in awe of their superior civilization and knowledge of arts. The country people had free access to the city, and Geneviève in her homely gown and veil passed by Hilperik's guards without being suspected of being more than any ordinary Gaulish village maid ; and thus she fearlessly made her

way even to the old Roman halls, where the long-haired Hilperik was holding his wild carousal. Would that we knew more of that interview—one of the most striking that ever took place! We can only picture to ourselves the Roman tessellated pavement bestrewn with

wine, bones, and fragments of the barbarous revelry. There were untamed Franks, their sunburnt hair tied up in a knot at the top of their heads, and falling down like a horse's tail, their faces close shaven, except two huge moustaches, and dressed in tight leather garments, with swords at their

wide belts. Some slept, some feasted, some greased their long locks, some shouted out their favourite war songs around the table, which was covered with the spoils of churches; and at their head sat the wild,

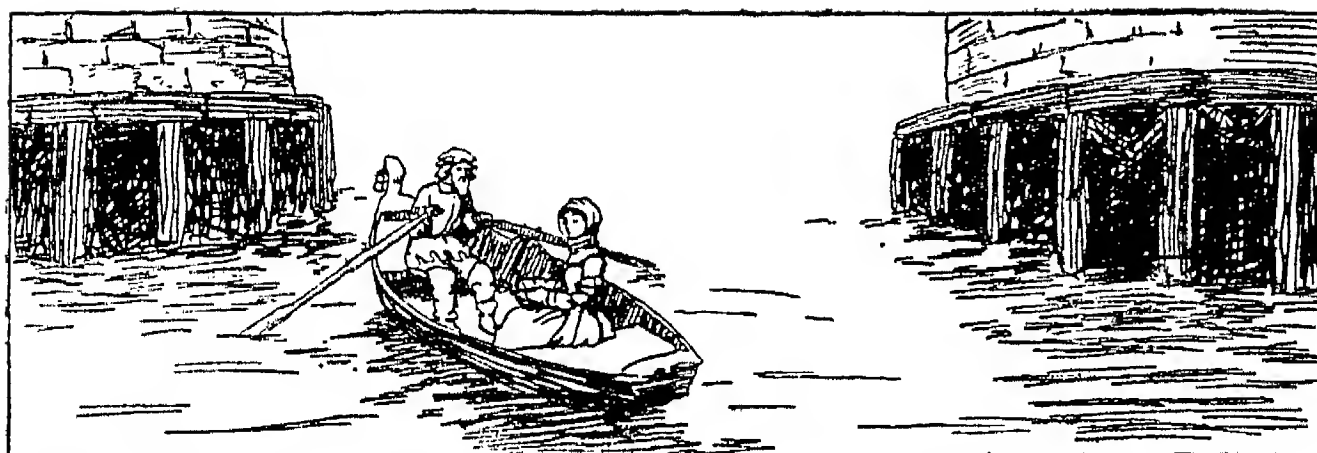


long-haired chieftain, who was a few years later driven away by his own followers for his excesses—the whole scene was all that was abhorrent to a pure, devout, and faithful nature ; most full of terror to a woman. Yet there, in her strength, stood the peasant maiden, her heart full of trust and pity, her looks full of the power that is given by fearlessness of them that can kill the body. What she said we do not know—we only know that the barbarous Hilperik was overawed. He trembled before the expostulations of the brave woman, and granted all she asked—the safety of his prisoners, and mercy to the terrified inhabitants. No wonder that the people of Paris have ever since looked back to Geneviève as their protectress, and that in after ages she has grown to be the patron saint of the city.

She lived to see the son of Hilperik,

Chlodweh, or, as he was more commonly called, Clovis, marry a Christian wife, Clotilda, and after a time become a Christian. She saw the foundation of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, and of the two famous churches of St. Denys and of St. Martin of Tours, and gave her full share to the first efforts for bringing the rude and blood-thirsty conquerors to some knowledge of Christian faith, mercy, and purity. After a life of constant prayer and charity she died, three months after King Clovis, in the year 512, the eighty-ninth year of her age.*

* Perhaps the exploits of the Maid of Orleans were the most like those of Geneviève, but they are not here added to our collection of "Golden Deeds," because the Maid's belief that she was directly inspired removes them from the ordinary class. Alas! the English did not treat her as Hilperik treated Geneviève.



IV.

SIR THOMAS MORE'S DAUGHTER.

1535.

ANCIENT stories tell of the grave and beautiful Antigone, who was put to death for performing the last rites over the corpse of her brother; but there have been women who have been as brave and devoted in their care for the mortal remains of their friends—not from the heathen fancy that the weal of the dead depended on such rites, but from their earnest love, and with a fuller trust beyond.

Such was the spirit of Beatrix, a noble

maiden of Rome, who shared the Christian faith of her two brothers, Simplicius and Faustinus, at the end of the third century. For many years there had been no persecution, and the Christians were living at peace, worshipping freely, and venturing even to raise churches. Young people had grown up to whom the being thrown to the lions, beheaded, or burnt for the faith's sake, was but a story of the times gone by. But under the Emperor Diocletian all was changed. The old heathen gods must be worshipped, incense must be burnt to the statue of the Emperor, or torture and death were the punishment. The two brothers Simplicius and Faustinus were thus asked to deny their faith, and resolutely refused. They were cruelly tortured, and at length beheaded, and their bodies thrown into the tawny waters of the Tiber.

Their sister Beatrix had taken refuge with a poor devout Christian woman named Lucina. But she did not desert her brothers in death ; she made her way in secret to the bank of the river, watching to see whether the stream might bear down the corpses so dear to her. Driven along, so as to rest upon the bank, she found them at last, and, by the help of Lucina, she laid them in the grave in the cemetery called *Ad Ursum Pileatum*. For seven months she remained in her shelter, but she was at last denounced, and was brought before the tribunal, where she made answer that nothing should induce her to adore gods made of wood and stone. She was strangled in her prison, and her corpse being cast out, was taken home by Lucina, and buried beside her brothers. It was, indeed, a favourite charitable work of the Christian widows at

Rome to provide for the burial of the martyrs; and as for the most part they were poor old obscure women, they could perform this good work with far less notice than could persons of more mark.

But nearer home, our own country shows a truly Christian Antigone, resembling the



Greek lady both in her dutifulness to the living and in her tender care for the dead. This was Margaret, the favourite daughter of Sir Thomas More, the true-hearted, faithful statesman of King Henry VIII.

Margaret's home had been an exceedingly happy one. Her father, Sir Thomas More, was a man of the utmost worth, and was both earnestly religious and conscientious, and of a sweetness of manner and playfulness of fancy that endeared him to

every one. He was one of the most affectionate and dutiful of sons to his aged father, Sir John More; and when the son was Lord Chancellor, while the father was only a judge, Sir Thomas, on his way to his court, never failed to kneel down before his father in public, and ask his blessing. Never was the old saying, that a dutiful child has dutiful children, better exemplified than in the More family. In the times when it was usual for parents to be very stern with children, and keep them at a great distance, sometimes making them stand in their presence, and striking them for any slight offence, Sir Thomas More thought it his duty to be friendly and affectionate with them, to talk to them, and to enter into their confidence; and he was rewarded with their full love and duty.

He had four children—Margaret, Eliza-

beth, Cicely, and John. His much-loved wife died when they were all very young, and he thought it for their good to marry a widow, Mrs. Alice Middleton, with one daughter named Margaret, and he likewise adopted an orphan called Margaret Giggs. With this household he lived in a beautiful large house at Chelsea, with well-trimmed gardens sloping down to the Thames; and this was the resort of the most learned and able men, both English and visitors from abroad, who delighted in pacing the shady walks, listening to the wit and wisdom of Sir Thomas, or conversing with the daughters, who had been highly educated, and had much of their father's humour and sprightliness. Even Henry VIII. himself, then one of the most brilliant and





Sir Thomas More visited by his Daughter in Prison.

(From the picture by J. R. Herbert, R.A., in the National Gallery.)

graceful gentlemen of his time, would sometimes arrive in his royal barge and talk theology or astronomy with Sir Thomas, or, it might be, crack jests with him and his daughters, or listen to the music in which all were skilled, even Lady More having been persuaded in her old age to learn to play on various instruments, including the flute. The daughters were early given in marriage, and, with their husbands, continued to live under their father's roof. Margaret's husband was William Roper, a young lawyer, of whom Sir Thomas was very fond; and his household at Chelsea was thus a large and joyous family home of children and grandchildren, delighting in the kind, bright smiles of the open face under the square cap that the great painter Holbein has sent down to us as a familiar sight.

But these glad days were not to last for ever. The trying times of the reign of

Henry VIII. were beginning, and the question had been stirred whether the King's marriage with Katharine of Arragon had been a lawful one. When Sir Thomas More found that the King was determined to take his own course, and to divorce himself without permission from the Pope, it was against his conscience to remain in office when acts were being done which he could not think right or lawful. He therefore resigned his office as Lord Chancellor, and feeling himself free from the load and temptation, his gay spirits rose higher than ever. His manner of communicating the change to his wife, who had been very proud of his state and dignity, was thus. At church, when the service was over, it had always been the custom for one of his attendants to summon Lady More by coming to her closet door and saying, "Madam, my lord is gone." On the day after his resigna-

tion, he himself stepped up, and with a low bow said, "Madam, my lord is gone"—for in good sooth he was no longer Chancellor, but only plain Sir Thomas.

He thoroughly enjoyed his leisure, but he was not long left in tranquillity. When Anne Boleyn was crowned, he was invited to be present, and twenty pounds were offered him to buy a suitably splendid dress for the occasion ; but his conscience would not allow him to accept the invitation, though he well knew the terrible peril he ran by offending the King and Queen. Thenceforth there was a determination to ruin him. First, he was accused of taking bribes when administering justice. It was said that a gilt cup had been given to him as a New Year's



gift by one lady, and a pair of gloves filled with gold coins by another; but it turned out, on examination, that he had drunk the wine out of the cup, and accepted the gloves because it was ill manners to refuse a lady's gift, yet he had in both cases given back the gold.

Next, a charge was brought that he had been leaguings with a half-crazy woman called the Nun of Kent, who had said violent things about the King. He was sent for to be examined by Henry and his Council, and this he well knew was the interview on which his safety would turn, since the accusation was a mere pretext, and the real purpose of the King was to see whether he would go along with him in breaking away from Rome—a proceeding that Sir Thomas, both as churchman and as lawyer, could not think legal. Whether we agree or not in his views, it must always be remembered that he ran'

into danger by speaking the truth and doing what he thought right. He really loved his master, and he knew the humour of Henry VIII., and the temptation was sore ; but when he came down from his conference with the King in the Tower, and was rowed down the river to Chelsea, he was so merry that William Roper, who had been waiting for him in the boat, thought he must be safe, and said, as they landed and walked up the garden,—

“ I trust, sir, all is well, since you are so merry ? ”

“ It is so, indeed, son, thank God ! ”

“ Are you then, sir, put out of the bill ? ”

“ Wouldest thou know, son, why I am so joyful ? In good faith I rejoyce that I have given the devil a foul fall, because I have with those lords gone so far that without great shame I can never go back,”

he answered, meaning that he had been enabled to hold so firmly to his opinions, and speak them out so boldly, that henceforth the temptation to dissemble them and please the King would be much lessened. That he had held his purpose in spite of the weakness of mortal nature was true joy to him, though he was so well aware of the consequences that when his daughter Margaret came to him the next day with the glad tidings that the charge against him had been given up, he calmly answered her, "In faith, Meg, what is put off is not given up."

One day, when he had asked Margaret how the world went with the new Queen, and she replied, "In faith, father, never better; there is nothing else in the court but dancing and sporting," he replied, with sad foresight, "Never better. Alas, Meg, it pitieth me to remember unto what misery,

poor soul, she will shortly come. These dances of hers will prove such dances that she will spurn off our heads like footballs, but it will not be long ere her head will take the same dance."

So entirely did he expect to be summoned by a pursuivant that he thought it would lessen the fright of his family if a sham summons were brought. So he caused a great knocking to be made while all were at dinner, and the sham pursuivant went through all the forms of citing him, and the whole household were in much alarm, till he explained the jest; but the earnest came only a few days afterwards. On the 13th of April of 1534 arrived the real pursuivant to summon him to Lambeth, there to take the oath of supremacy, declaring that the King was the head of the Church of England, and that the Pope had no authority

there. He knew what the refusal would bring on him. He went first to church, and then, not trusting himself to be unmanned by his love for his children and grandchildren, instead of letting them, as usual, come down to the waterside, with tender kisses and many farewells, he shut the wicket-gate of the garden upon them all, and only allowed his son-in-law Roper to accompany him, whispering into his ear, "I thank our Lord, the field is won."

Conscience had triumphed over affection, and he was thankful, though for the last time he looked on the trees he had planted and the happy home he had loved. Before the Council he undertook to swear to some clauses in the oath which were connected with the safety of the realm, but he refused to take that part of the oath which related to the King's power over the Church. It

is said that the King would thus have been satisfied, but that the Queen urged him further. At any rate, after being four days under the charge of the Abbot of Westminster, Sir Thomas was sent to the Tower of London. There his wife—a plain, dull woman, utterly unable to understand the point of conscience—came and scolded him for being so foolish as to lie there in a close, filthy prison, and be shut up with rats and mice, instead of enjoying the favour of the King. He heard all she had to say, and answered, “I pray thee, good Mrs. Alice, tell me one thing—is not this house as near heaven as my own?” To which she had no better answer than “Tilly vally, tilly vally.” But, in spite of her folly, she loved him faithfully, and



when all his property was seized, she sold even her clothes to obtain necessities for him in prison.

His chief comfort was, however, in visits and letters from his daughter Margaret, who was fully able to enter into the spirit that preferred death to transgression. He was tried in Westminster Hall on the 1st of July, and, as he had fully expected, sentenced to death. He was taken back along the river to the Tower. On the wharf his loving Margaret was waiting for her last look. She broke through the guard of soldiers with bills and halberds, threw her arms round his neck, and kissed him, unable to say any word but "O my father! O my father!" He blessed her, and told her that whatsoever she might suffer, it was not without the will of God, and she must therefore be patient. After having once parted with

him, she suddenly turned back again, ran to him, and clinging round his neck, kissed him over and over again—a sight at which the guards themselves wept. She never saw him again; but the night before his execution he wrote to her a letter with a piece of charcoal, with tender remembrances to all the family, and saying to her, “I never liked your manner better than when you kissed me last; for I am most pleased when daughterly love and dear charity have no leisure to look to worldly courtesy.” He likewise made it his especial request that she might be permitted to be present at his burial.

His hope was sure and steadfast, and his heart so firm that he did not even cease from humorous sayings. When he mounted the crazy ladder of the scaffold he said, “Master Lieutenant, I pray you see me

safe up ; and for my coming down let me shift for myself." And he desired the executioner to give him time to put his beard out of the way of the stroke, "since that had never offended his Highness."



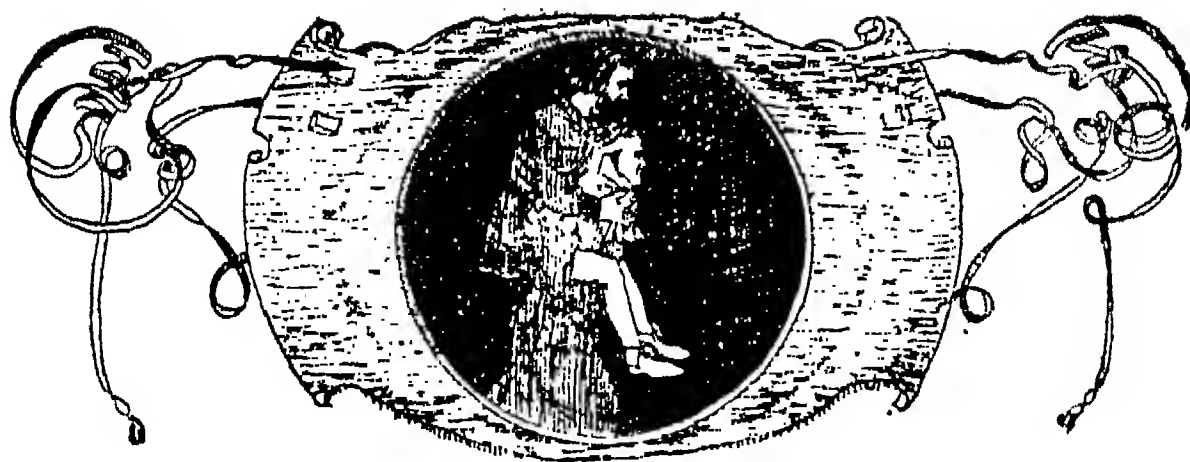
His body was given to his family, and laid in the tomb he had already prepared in Chelsea Church ; but the head was set up on a pole on London

Bridge. The calm, sweet features were little changed, and the loving daughter gathered courage as she looked up at them. How she contrived the deed is not known, but before many days had passed the head was no longer there, and Mrs. Roper was said to have taken it away. She was sent for to the Council and accused of the stealing of her

father's head. She shrank not from avowing that thus it had been, and that the head was in her own possession. One story says that, as she was passing under the bridge in a boat, she looked up and said, "That head has often lain in my lap; I would that it would now fall into it." And at that moment it actually fell, and she received it. It is far more likely that she went by design, at the same time as some faithful friend on the bridge, who detached the precious head and dropped it down to her in her boat beneath. Be this as it may, she owned before the cruel-hearted Council that she had taken away and cherished the head of the man whom they had slain as a traitor. However, Henry VIII. was not a Creon, and our Christian Antigone was dismissed unhurt by the Council, and allowed to retain possession of her treasure. She caused it to be em-

balmed, kept it with her wherever she went, and when, nine years afterwards, she died (in the year 1544), it was laid in her coffin in the “Roper aisle” of St. Dunstan’s Church at Canterbury.





V.

THE HOUSEWIVES OF
LÖWENBURG.

1631.

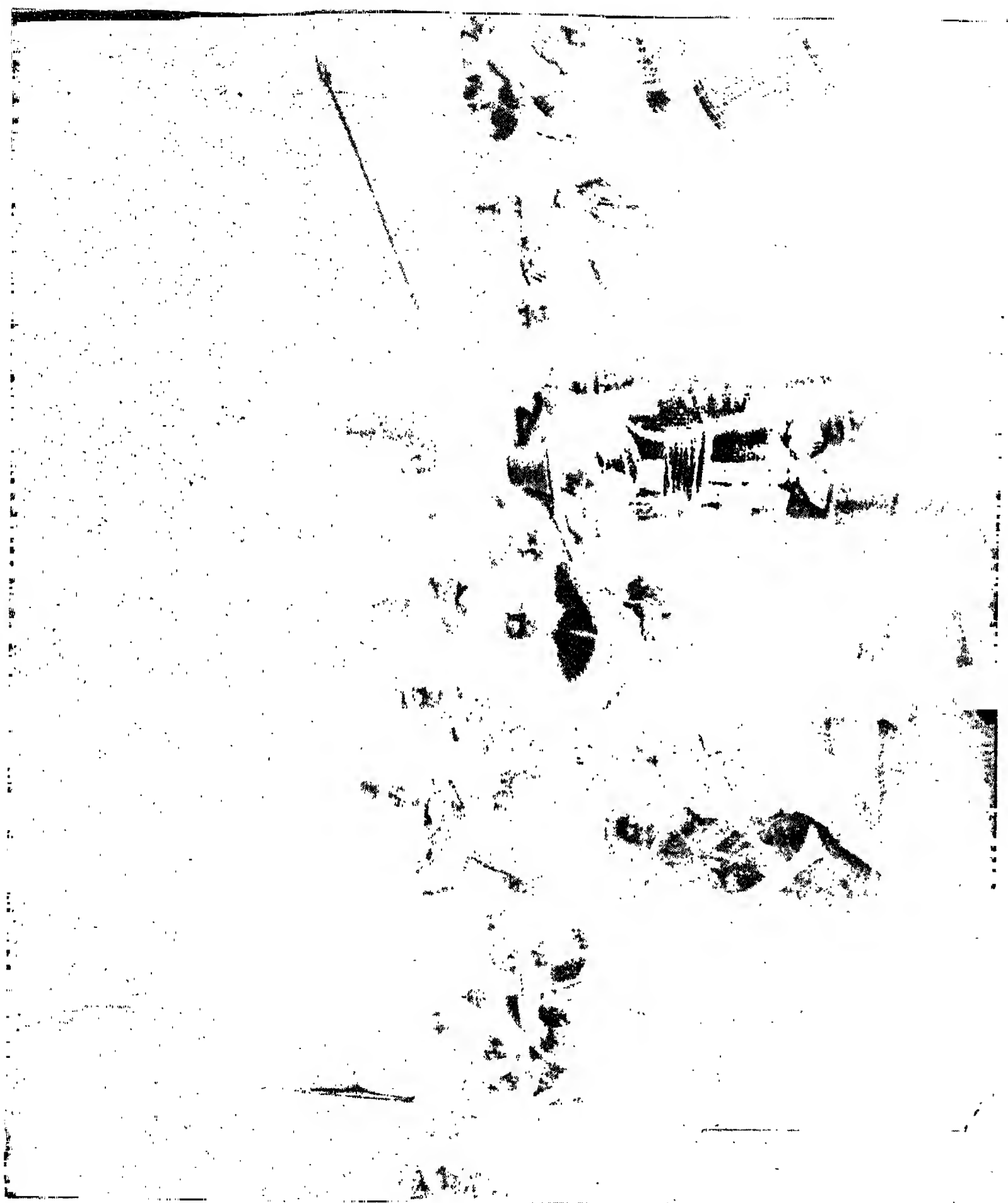
BRAVE deeds have been done by the burgher dames of some of the German cities collectively. Without being of the first class of Golden Deeds, there is something in the exploit of the dames of Weinsberg so quaint and so touching that it cannot be omitted here.

It was in the first commencement of the long contest known as the strife between the Guelfs and Ghibellines—before even these

had become the party words for the Pope's and the Emperor's friends, and when they only applied to the troops of Bavaria and of Swabia—that, in 1141, Wolf, Duke of Bavaria, was besieged in his castle of Weinsberg by Friedrich, Duke of Swabia, brother to the reigning emperor, Konrad III.

The siege lasted long, but Wolf was obliged at last to offer to surrender ; and the Emperor granted him permission to depart in safety. But his wife did not trust to this fair offer. She had reason to believe that Konrad had a peculiar enmity to her husband ; and on his coming to take possession of the castle, she sent to him to entreat him to give her a safe-conduct for herself and all the other women in the garrison, that they might come out with as much of their valuables as they could carry.

This was freely granted, and presently the



The Night-Watch.
(From the painting by Rembrandt, in the Amsterdam Gallery.)

castle gates opened. From beneath them came the ladies—but in strange guise. No gold or jewels were carried by them, but each one was bending under the weight of her husband, whom she thus hoped to secure from the vengeance of the Ghibellines. Konrad, who was really a generous and merciful man, is said to have been affected to tears by this extraordinary performance: he hastened to assure the ladies of the perfect safety of their lords, and that the gentlemen might dismount at once, secure both of life and freedom. He invited them all to a banquet, and made peace with the Duke of Bavaria on terms much more favourable to the Guelfs than the rest of his party had been willing to allow. The castle mount was thenceforth called no longer the Vine Hill, but the Hill of Weibertreue, or woman's fidelity. We will not invidiously translate it woman's

truth, for there was in the transaction something of a subterfuge ; and it must be owned that the ladies tried to the utmost the knightly respect for womankind.

The good women of Löwenburg, who were but citizens' wives, seem to us more worthy of admiration for constancy to their faith, shown at a time when they had little to aid them. It was such constancy as makes martyrs ; and though the trial stopped short of this, there is something in the homeliness of the whole scene, and the feminine form of passive resistance, that makes us so much honour and admire the good women that we cannot refrain from telling the story.

It was in the year 1631, in the midst of the long 'Thirty Years' War between Roman Catholics and Protestants, which finally decided that each state should have

its own religion, Löwenburg, a city in Silesia, originally Protestant, had passed into the hands of the Emperor's Roman Catholic party. It was a fine old German city, standing amid woods and meadows, fortified with strong walls surrounded by a moat, and with gate-towers to protect the entrance.

In the centre was a large market-place, called the Ring, into which looked the Council-house and fourteen inns, or places of traffic, for the cloth that was woven in no less than 300 factories. The houses were of stone, with gradually-projecting stories to the number of four or five, surmounted with pointed gables. The ground floors had once had trellised porches, but these had been found inconvenient, and were removed ; and the lower story consisted of a large hall and strong vault, with a spacious room behind it containing a baking-oven, and a staircase

leading to a wooden gallery, where the family used to dine. It seems they slept in the room below, though they had upstairs a handsome wainscoted apartment.

Very rich and flourishing had the Löwenburgers always been, and their walls were

quite sufficient to turn back any robber barons, or even any invading Poles; but things were different when firearms were in use, and the bands of mercenary soldiers had succeeded the feudal army. They were infinitely more formidable during the battle or siege from their discipline, and yet more dreadful after it from their want of dis-



cipline. The poor Löwenburgers had been greatly misused: their Lutheran pastors had been expelled; all the superior citizens had

either fled or been imprisoned ; 250 families spent the summer in the woods, and of those who remained in the city, the men had for the most part outwardly conformed to the Roman Catholic Church. Most of these were of course indifferent at heart, and they had found places in the Town Council which had formerly been filled by more respectable men. However, the wives had almost all remained staunch to their Lutheran confession ; they had followed their pastors weeping to the gates of the city, loading them with gifts, and they hastened at every opportunity to hear their preachings, or obtain baptism for their children at the Lutheran churches in the neighbourhood.

The person who had the upper hand in the Council was one Julius, who had been a Franciscan friar, but was a desperate, unscrupulous fellow, not at all like a monk.

Finding that it was considered as a reproach that the churches of Löwenburg were empty,



he called the whole Council together on the 9th of April 1631, and informed them that the women must be brought to conformity, or else there were towers and prisons for them. The Bur-

gomaster was ill in bed, but the Judge, one Elias Seiler, spoke up at once. "If we have been able to bring the men into the right path, why should not we be able to deal with these little creatures?"

Herr Mesnel, a cloth-factor, who had been a widower six weeks, thought it would be hard to manage, though he quite agreed to the expedient, saying, "It would be truly good if man and wife had one Creed and one Paternoster; as concerns the Ten Command-

ments it is not so pressing.” (A sentiment that he could hardly have wished to see put in practice.)

Another councillor, called Schwob Franze, who had lost his wife a few days before, seems to have had an eye to the future, for he said it would be a pity to frighten away the many beautiful maidens and widows there were among the Lutheran women. But on the whole the men without wives were much bolder and more sanguine of success than the married ones. And no one would undertake to deal with his own wife privately, so it ended by a message being sent to the more distinguished ladies to attend the Council.

But presently up came tidings that not merely these few dames, whom they might have hoped to overawe, were on their way, but that the Judge’s wife and the Burgo-



master's were the first pair in a procession of full 500 housewives, who were walking sedately up the stairs to the Council Hall below the chamber where the dignitaries were assembled. This was not by any means what had been expected, and the message was sent down that only the chief ladies should come up. "No," replied the Judge's wife; "we will not allow ourselves to be separated." And to

this they were firm—they said, as one fared all should fare; and the Town Clerk, going up and down with smooth words, received no better answer than this from the Judge's wife, who, it must be confessed, was less ladylike in language than resolute in faith:—

"Nay, nay, dear friend, do you think we are so simple as not to perceive the trick by which you would force us poor women

against our conscience to change our faith ? My husband and the priest have not been consorting together all these days for nothing ; they have been joined together almost day and night. Assuredly they have either boiled or baked a devil, which they may eat up themselves. I shall not enter there ! Where I remain, my train and following will remain also !—Women, is this your will ? ”

“ Yea, yea, let it be so,” they said ; “ we will all hold together as one man.”

His honour the Town Clerk was much affrighted, and went hastily back, reporting that the Council was in no small danger, since each housewife had her bunch of keys at her side ! These keys were the badge of a wife’s dignity and authority, and moreover they were such ponderous articles that they sometimes served as weapons. A Scottish virago has been known to dash out the

brains of a wounded enemy with her keys ; and the intelligence that the good dames had come so well furnished filled the Council with panic. Dr. Melchior Hubner, who had been a miller's man, wished for a hundred musketeers to mow them down ; but the Town Clerk proposed that all the Council should creep quietly down the back stairs, lock the doors on the refractory womankind, and make their escape.

This was effected as silently and quickly as possible, for the whole Council "could confess to a state of frightful terror." Presently the women peeped out, and saw the stairs bestrewn with hats, gloves, and handkerchiefs ; and perceiving how they had put all the wisdom and authority of the town to the rout, there was great merriment among them, though, finding themselves locked up, the more tender-hearted began to pity their husbands and children. As for themselves,

their maids and children came round the Town Hall, to hand in provisions to them, and all the men who were not of the Council were seeking the magistrates to know what their wives had done to be thus locked up.

The Judge sent to assemble the rest of the Council at his house ; and though only four came, the doorkeeper ran to the Town Hall, and called out to his wife that the Council had reassembled, and they would soon be let out. To which, however, that very shrewd dame the Judge's wife answered with great composure, " Yea, we willingly have patience, as we are quite comfortable here ; but tell them they ought to inform us why we are summoned and confined without trial."

She well knew how much better off she was than her husband without her. He paced about in great perturbation, and at last called for something to eat. The maid

served up a dish of crab, some white bread, and butter ; but in his fury he threw all the food about the room and out of the window, away from the poor children, who had nothing to eat all day, and at last he threw all the dishes and saucepans out of window. At last the Town Clerk and two others were sent to do their best to persuade the women that they had misunderstood—they were in no danger, and were only invited to the preachings of Holy Week ; and as Master Daniel, the joiner, added, “It was only a friendly conference. It is not customary with my masters and the very wise Council to hang a man before they have caught him.”

This opprobrious illustration raised a considerable clamour of abuse from the ruder women ; but the Judge’s and Burgomaster’s ladies silenced them, and repeated their resolution never to give up their faith against

their conscience. Seeing that no impression was made on them, and that nobody knew what to do without them at home, the magistracy decided that they should be released, and they went quietly home ; but the Judge Seiler, either because he had been foremost in the business, or else perhaps because of the devastation he had made at home among the pots and pans, durst not meet his wife, but sneaked out of the town, and left her with the house to herself.

The priest now tried getting the three chief ladies alone together, and most politely begged them to conform ; but instead of arguing, they simply answered, “ No ; we were otherwise instructed by our parents and former preachers.”

Then he begged them at least to tell the other women that they had asked for fourteen days for consideration.

“No, dear sir,” they replied; “we were not taught by our parents to tell falsehoods, and we will not learn it from you.”

Meanwhile Schwob Franze rushed to the Burgomaster’s bedside, and begged him, for



Heaven’s sake, to prevent the priest from meddling with the women; for the whole bevy, hearing that their three leaders were called before the priests, were collecting in the market-place, keys, bundles, and all; and the panic of the worthy magistrates was renewed. The Burgomaster sent for the priest, and told him plainly that if any harm befell him from the women the fault would be his own; and thereupon he gave way, the ladies went quietly home, and their stout champions laid aside their bundles and keys—not out of reach, however, in case of another summons.

However, the priest was obliged next year to leave Löwenburg in disgrace, for he was a man of notoriously bad character ; and Dr. Melchior became a soldier, and was hanged at Prague.

After all, such a confession as this is a mere trifle, not only compared with martyrdoms of old, but with the constancy with which, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the Huguenots endured persecution—as, for instance, the large number of women who were imprisoned for thirty-eight years at Aigues Mortes ; or, again, with the steady resolution of the persecuted nuns of Port Royal against signing the condemnation of the works of Jansen. Yet in its own way the feminine resistance of these good citizens' wives, without being equally high-toned, is worthy of record, and far too full of character to be passed over.



VI.

FATHERS AND SONS.

219—1642—1798.

ONE of the noblest characters in old Roman history is the first Scipio Africanus, and his first appearance is in a most pleasing light, at the battle of the river Ticinus, 219 B.C., when the Carthaginians, under Hannibal, had just completed their wonderful march across the Alps, and surprised the Romans in Italy itself.

Young Scipio was then only seventeen years of age, and had gone to his first battle under the eagles of his father, the Consul



The Battle of the Nile.—Blowing up of the “Orient.”

(From the painting by W. L. Wyllie, R.A. By kind permission of the Artist.)

Publius Cornelius Scipio. It was an unfortunate battle : the Romans, when exhausted by long resistance to the Spanish horse in Hannibal's army, were taken in flank by the Numidian cavalry, and entirely broken. The Consul rode in front of the few equites he could keep together, striving by voice and example to rally his forces, until he was pierced by one of the long Numidian javelins, and fell senseless from his horse. The Romans, thinking him dead, entirely gave way ; but his young son would not leave him, and lifting him on his horse, succeeded in bringing him safe into the camp, where he recovered, and his after days retrieved the honour of the Roman arms.

The story of a brave and devoted son comes to us to light up the sadness of our civil wars between Cavaliers and Roundheads

in the middle of the seventeenth century. It was soon after King Charles had raised his standard at Nottingham, and set forth on his march for London, that it became evident that the Parliamentary army, under the Earl of Essex, intended to intercept his march. The King himself was with the army, with his two boys, Charles and James ; but the General-in-chief was Robert Bertie, Earl of Lindsay, a brave and experienced old soldier, sixty years of age, godson to Queen Elizabeth, and to her two favourite earls, whose Christian name he bore. He had been in her Essex's expedition to Cambridge, and had afterwards served in the Low Countries, under Prince Maurice of Nassau ; for the long Continental wars had throughout King James's peaceful reign been treated by the English nobility as schools of arms, and a few campaigns were considered as a graceful

finish to a gentleman's education. As soon as Lord Lindsay had begun to fear that the disputes between the King and Parliament must end in war, he had begun to exercise and train his tenantry in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, of whom he had formed a regiment of infantry. With him was his son Montagu Bertie, Lord Willoughby, a noble-looking man of thirty-two, of whom it was said that he was "as excellent in reality as others in pretence," and that, thinking "that the cross was an ornament to the crown, and much more to the coronet, he satisfied not himself with the mere exercise of virtue, but sublimated it, and made it grace." He had likewise seen some service against the Spaniards in the Netherlands, and after his return had been made a captain in the Life Guards, and a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. Vandyke has left

portraits of the father and the son—the one a bald-headed, alert, precise-looking old warrior, with the cuirass and gauntlets of elder warfare; the other, the very model of a cavalier, tall, easy, and graceful, with a gentle, reflecting face, and wearing the long lovelocks and deep-point lace collar and cuffs

characteristic of Queen Henrietta's Court. Lindsay was called General-in-chief, but the King had imprudently exempted the cavalry from his command—its general, Prince Rupert of the Rhine, taking orders only from himself. Rupert was only three-and-twenty, and his education in the wild school of the Thirty

Years' War had not taught him to lay aside his arrogance and opinionativeness; indeed, he had shown great petulance at



receiving orders from the King through Lord Falkland.

At eight o'clock on the morning of the 23rd of October King Charles was riding along the ridge of Edgehill, and looking down into the Vale of Red Horse, a fair meadow land, here and there broken by hedges and copses. His troops were mustering around him, and in the valley he could see with his telescope the various Parliamentary regiments, as they poured out of the town of Keinton and took up their positions in three lines. "I never saw the rebels in a body before," he said as he gazed sadly at the subjects arrayed against him. "I shall give them battle. God, and the prayers of good men to Him, assist the justice of my cause." The whole of his forces, about 11,000 in number, were not assembled till two o'clock in the afternoon,

for the gentlemen who had become officers found it no easy matter to call their farmers and retainers together and marshal them into any sort of order. But while one troop after another came trampling, clanking, and shouting in, trying to find and take their proper place, there were hot words round the royal standard.

Lord Lindsay, who was an old comrade of the Earl of Essex, the commander of the rebel forces, knew that he would follow the tactics they had both together studied in Holland, little thinking that one day they should be arrayed one against the other in their own native England. He had a high opinion of Essex's generalship, and insisted that the situation of the Royal army required the utmost caution. Rupert, on the other hand, had seen the swift, fiery charges of the fierce troopers of the 'Thirty Years' War,

and was backed up by Patrick, Lord Ruthven, one of the many Scots who had won honour under the great Swedish King, Gustavus Adolphus. A sudden charge of the Royal Horse would, Rupert argued, sweep the Roundheads from the field, and the foot would have nothing to do but to follow up the victory. The great portrait at Windsor shows us exactly how the King must have stood, with his charger by his side, and his grave, melancholy face, sad enough at having to fight at all with his subjects, and, never having seen a battle, entirely bewildered between the ardent words of his spirited nephew and the grave replies of the well-seasoned old Earl. At last, as time went on and some decision was necessary, the perplexed King, willing at



least not to irritate Rupert, desired that Ruthven should array the troops in the Swedish fashion.

It was a greater affront to the General-in-chief than the King was likely to understand, but it could not shake the old soldier's loyalty. He gravely resigned the empty title of General, which only made confusion worse confounded, and rode away to act as colonel of his own Lincoln regiment, pitying his master's perplexity, and resolved that no private pique should hinder him from doing his duty. His regiment was of foot-soldiers, and was just opposite to the standard of the Earl of Essex.

The church bell was ringing for afternoon service when the Royal forces marched down the hill. The last hurried prayer before the charge was stout old Sir Jacob Astley's, "O Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be

this day ; if I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me.” Then rising, he said, “March on, boys.” And, amid prayer and exhortation, the other side awaited the shock, as men whom a strong and deeply embittered sense of wrong had roused to take up arms. Prince Rupert’s charge was, however, fully successful. No one even waited to cross swords with his troopers, but all the Roundhead horse galloped headlong off the field, hotly pursued by the Royalists. But the main body of the army stood firm, and for some time the battle was nearly equal, until a large troop of the enemy’s cavalry who had been kept in reserve wheeled round and fell upon the Royal forces just when their scanty supply of ammunition was exhausted.

Step by step, however, they retreated bravely, and Rupert, who had returned from his charge, sought in vain to collect his

scattered troopers, so as to fall again on the rebels ; but some were plundering, some chasing the enemy, and none could be got together. Lord Lindsay was shot through the thigh bone, and fell. He was instantly surrounded by the rebels on horseback ; but his son, Lord Willoughby, seeing his danger, flung himself alone among the enemy, and forcing his way forward, raised his father in his arms, thinking of nothing else, and unheeding his own peril.



The throng of enemy around called to him to surrender, and hastily giving up his sword, he carried the Earl into the nearest shed, and laid him on a heap of straw, vainly striving to stanch the blood. It was a bitterly cold night, and the frosty wind came howling through the darkness. Far above, on the

ridge of the hill, the fires of the King's army shone with red light, and some way off on the other side twinkled those of the Parliamentary forces. Glimmering lanterns or torches moved about the battlefield—those of the savage plunderers who crept about to despoil the dead. Whether the battle were won or lost the father and son knew not, and the guard who watched them knew as little. Lord Lindsay himself murmured, "If it please God I should survive, I never will fight in the same field with boys again!"—no doubt deeming that young Rupert had wrought all the mischief. His thoughts were all on the cause, his son's all on him; and piteous was that night as the blood continued to



flow, and nothing availed to check it, nor was any aid near to restore the old man's ebbing strength.

Towards midnight the Earl's old comrade Essex had time to understand his condition, and sent some officers to inquire for him and promise speedy surgical attendance. Lindsay was still full of spirit, and spoke to them so strongly of their broken faith, and of the sin of disloyalty and rebellion, that they slunk away one by one out of the hut, and dissuaded Essex from coming himself to see his old friend, as he had intended. The surgeon, however, arrived, but too late: Lindsay was already so much exhausted by cold and loss of blood that he died early in the morning of the 24th, all his son's gallant devotion having failed to save him.

The sorrowing son received an affectionate note the next day from the King, full of

regret for his father and esteem for himself. Charles made every effort to obtain his exchange, but could not succeed for a whole year. He was afterwards one of the four noblemen who, seven years later, followed the King's white, silent snowy funeral in the dismantled St. George's Chapel; and from first to last he was one of the bravest, purest, and most devoted of those who did honour to the Cavalier cause.

We have still another brave son to describe, and for him we must turn away from these sad pages of our history, when we were a house divided against itself, to one of the hours of our brightest glory, when the cause we fought in was the cause of all the oppressed, and nearly alone we upheld the rights of oppressed countries against the invader. And thus it is that the battle of the Nile is one of the exploits to which

we look back with the greatest exultation, when we think of the triumph of the British flag.

Let us think of all that was at stake. Napoleon Bonaparte was climbing to power in France, by directing her successful arms against the world. He had beaten Germany and conquered Italy; he had threatened England, and his dream was of the conquest of the East. Like another Alexander, he hoped to subdue Asia, and overthrow the hated British power



by depriving it of India. Hitherto his dreams had become earnest by the force of his marvellous genius, and by the ardour which he breathed into the whole French nation; and when he set sail from Toulon, with 40,000

tried and victorious soldiers and a magnificent fleet, all were filled with vague and unbounded expectations of almost fabulous glories. He swept away, as it were, the degenerate Knights of St. John from their rock of Malta, and sailed for Alexandria, in Egypt, in the latter end of June 1798.

His intentions had not become known, and the English Mediterranean fleet was watching the course of this great armament. Sir Horatio Nelson was in pursuit, with the English vessels, and wrote to the First Lord of the Admiralty: "Be they bound to the Antipodes, your lordship may rely that I will not lose a moment in bringing them to action."

Nelson had, however, not ships enough to be detached to reconnoitre, and he actually overpassed the French, whom he guessed to be on the way to Egypt; he arrived at the

port of Alexandria on the 28th of June, and saw its blue waters and flat coast lying still in their sunny torpor, as if no enemy were on the seas. Back he went to Syracuse, but could learn no more there. He obtained provisions with some difficulty, and then, in great anxiety, sailed for Greece, where at last, on the 28th of July, he learnt that the French fleet had been seen from Candia, steering to the south-east, about four weeks since. In fact, it had actually passed by him in a thick haze, which concealed each fleet from the other, and had arrived at Alexandria on the 1st of July, three days after he had left it!

Every sail was set for the south, and at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 1st of August a very different sight was seen in Aboukir Bay, so solitary a month ago. It was crowded with shipping. Great castle-

like men-of-war rose with all their proud, calm dignity out of the water, their dark portholes opening in the white bands on their sides, and the tricoloured flag floating as their ensign. There were thirteen ships of the line and four frigates, and of these three were 80-gun ships, and one, towering high above the rest, with her three decks, was *L'Orient*, of 120 guns. Look well at her, for there stands the hero for whose sake we have chosen this and no other of Nelson's glorious fights to place among the setting of our Golden Deeds. There he is, a little *cadet de vaisseau*, as the French call a midshipman, only ten years old, with a heart swelling between awe and exultation at the prospect of his first battle; but fearless and glad, for is he not the son of the brave Casabianca,



the flag-captain? And is not this Admiral Brueys's own ship, looking down in scorn on the fourteen little English ships, not one carrying more than 74 guns, and one only 50?

Why Napoleon had kept the fleet there was never known. In his usual mean way of disavowing whatever turned out ill, he laid the blame upon Admiral Brueys; but though dead men could not tell tales, his papers made it plain that the ships had remained in obedience to commands, though they had not been able to enter the harbour of Alexandria. Large rewards had been offered to any pilot who would take them in, but none could be found who would venture to steer into that port a vessel drawing more than twenty feet of water. They had, therefore, remained at anchor outside, in Aboukir Bay, drawn up in a curve along the deepest of the

water, with no room to pass them at either end, so that the commissary of the fleet reported that they could bid defiance to a force more than double their number. The admiral believed that Nelson had not ventured to attack him when they had passed by one another a month before, and when the English fleet was signalled he still supposed that it was too late in the day for an attack to be made.

Nelson had, however, no sooner learnt that the French were in sight than he signalled from his ship, the *Vanguard*, that preparations for battle should be made, and in the meantime summoned up his captains to receive his orders during a hurried meal. He explained that where there was room for a large French ship to swing, there was room for a small English one to anchor, and therefore he designed to bring his ships up

to the outer part of the French line, and station them close below their adversaries ; a plan that he said Lord Hood had once designed, though he had not carried it out.

Captain Berry was delighted, and exclaimed, “ If we succeed, what will the world say ? ”

“ There is no *if* in the case,” returned Nelson ; “ that we shall succeed is certain. Who may live to tell the tale is a very different question.”

And when they rose and parted he said, “ Before this time to-morrow I shall have gained a peerage or Westminster Abbey.”

In the fleet went, through a fierce storm of shot and shell from a French battery in an island in advance. Nelson’s own ship, the *Vanguard*, was the first to anchor within half-pistol-shot of the third French ship, the *Spartiate*. The *Vanguard* had six colours

flying, in case any should be shot away ; and such was the fire that was directed on her that in a few minutes every man at the six guns in her fore part was killed or wounded, and this happened three times. Nelson himself received a wound in the head, which was thought at first to be mortal, but which proved but slight. He would not allow the surgeon to leave the sailors to attend to him till it came to his turn.

Meantime his ships were doing their work gloriously. The *Bellerophon* was, indeed, overpowered by *L'Orient*, 200 of her crew killed, and all her masts and cables shot away, so that she drifted away as night came on ; but the *Swiftsure* came up in her place, and the *Alexander* and *Leander* both poured in their shot. Admiral Brueys received three wounds, but would not quit



his post, and at length a fourth shot almost cut him in two. He desired not to be carried below, but that he might die on deck.

About nine o'clock the ship took fire, and blazed up with fearful brightness, lighting up the whole bay, and showing five French ships with their colours hauled down, the others still fighting on. Nelson himself rose and came on deck when this fearful glow came shining from sea and sky into his cabin, and gave orders that the English boats should immediately be put off for *L'Orient*, to save as many lives as possible.

The English sailors rowed up to the burning ship which they had lately been attacking. The French officers listened to the offer of safety, and called to the little favourite of the ship, the captain's son, to come with them. "No," said the boy;

“he was where his father had stationed him, and bidden him not to move save at his call.” They told him his father’s voice would never call him again, for he lay senseless and mortally wounded on the deck, and that the ship must presently blow up. “No,” said the brave child ; “he must obey his father.” The moment allowed no delay—the boat put off. The flames showed all that passed in a quivering glare more intense than daylight, and the little fellow was then seen on the deck, leaning over the prostrate figure, and presently tying it to one of the spars of the shivered masts.

Just then a thundering explosion shook down to the very hold every ship in the harbour, and burning fragments of *L’Orient* came falling far and wide, plashing heavily into the water, in the dead, awful stillness that followed the fearful sound. English boats were plying

busily about, picking up those who had leapt overboard in time. Some were dragged in through the lower portholes of the English ships, and about seventy were saved altogether. For one moment a boat's crew had a sight of a helpless figure bound to a spar, and guided by a little childish swimmer, who must have gone overboard with his precious freight just before the explosion. They rowed after the brave little fellow, earnestly desiring to save him; but in darkness, in smoke, in lurid uncertain light, amid hosts of drowning wretches, they lost sight of him again.

“The boy, oh, where was he?
Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strewed the sea;
With mast and helm, and pennant fair
That well had borne their part:
But the noblest thing that perished there
Was that young faithful heart!”

By sunrise the victory was complete. Nay,

as Nelson said, “It was not a victory, but a conquest.” Only four French ships escaped, and Napoleon and his army were cut off from home. These are the glories of our navy, gained by men with hearts as true and obedient as that of the brave child they had tried in vain to save. Yet still, while giving the full meed of thankful, sympathetic honour to our noble sailors, we cannot but feel that the Golden Deed of Aboukir Bay fell to—

“That young faithful heart.”



VII.

THE SECOND OF SEPTEMBER.

1792.

THE period of the French Revolution was a dreadful time, which might be called the reign of the madness of the people. The oppression and injustice that had for generations past been worked out in France ended in the most fearful reaction that history records, and the horrors that took place in the Revolution pass all thought or description. Every institution that had been misused was overthrown at one fell swoop, and the whole accumulated vengeance of generations fell on the heads of

the persons who occupied the positions of the former oppressors. Many of these were as pure and guiltless as their slaughterers were the reverse ; but the heads of the Revolution imagined that to obtain their ideal vision of perfect justice and liberty, all the remnants of the former state of things must be swept away, and the ferocious beings who carried out their decrees had become absolutely frantic with delight in bloodshed. The nation seemed delivered up to a delirium of murder. But as

“ Even as earth’s wild war-cries heighten
The cross upon the brow will brighten,”

these times of surpassing horror were also times of surpassing devotion and heroism. Without attempting to describe the various stages of the Revolution, and the different committees that under different titles carried

on the work of destruction, we will mention some of the deeds that shine out as we look into that abyss of horror, the Paris of 1792 and the following years.

Think of the Swiss Guards, who on the 10th of August 1792, the miserable day when the King, Queen, and children were made the captives of the people, stood resolutely at their posts, till they were massacred almost to a man. Well is their fidelity honoured by the noble sculpture near Lucerne, cut out in the living rock of their own Alps, and representing a lion dying to defend the *fleur-de-lis*.

A more dreadful day still was in preparation. The mob seemed to have imagined that the King and nobility had some strange, dreadful power, and that unless they were all annihilated they would rise up and trample all down before them ; and those who had

the direction of affairs profited by this delusion to multiply executioners, and clear away all that they supposed to stand in the way of the renewal of the nation. And the attempts of the emigrant nobility and of the German princes to march to the rescue of the royal family added to the fury of their cowardly ferocity. The



prisons of Paris were crowded to overflowing with aristocrats, as it was the fashion to call the nobles and gentry, and with the clergy who had refused their adhesion to the new state of things. The whole number is reckoned at not less than 8,000.

Among those at the Abbaye de St. Germain was M. Jacques Cazotte, an old gentleman of seventy-three, who had been for many years

in a government office, and had written various poems. He was living in the country, in Champagne, when on the 18th of August he was arrested. His daughter Elizabeth, a lovely girl of twenty, would not leave him, and together they were taken first to Epernay and then to Paris, where they were thrown into the Abbaye, and found it crowded with prisoners. M. Cazotte's bald forehead and gray locks gave him a patriarchal appearance, and his talk, deeply and truly pious, was full of Scripture language, as he strove to persuade his fellow-captives to own the true blessings of suffering.

Here Elizabeth met the like-minded Marie de Sombreuil, who had clung to her father, Charles, Viscount de Sombreuil, the Governor of the Invalides, or pensioners of the French army; and here, too, had Madame de Fausse Lendry come with her old uncle the Abbé de

Rastignac, who had been for three months extremely ill, and was only just recovering when dragged to the prison, and there placed in a room so crowded that it was not possible to turn round, and the air in the end of August was fearfully close and heated. Not once while there was the poor old man able to sleep. His niece spent the nights in a room belonging to the jailer, with the Princess de Tarente and Mademoiselle de Sombreuil.

On the 2nd of September these slaughter-houses were as full as they could hold, and about a hundred ruffians armed with axes and guns were sent round to all the jails to do the bloody work. It was a Sunday, and some of the victims had tried to observe it religiously, though little divining that it was to be their last. They first took alarm on perceiving that their jailer had removed his family, and then that he sent up their dinner

earlier than usual, and removed all the knives and forks. By-and-by howls and shouts were heard, and the tocsin was heard ringing, alarm guns firing, and reports came in to the prisoners of Abbaye that the populace were breaking into the prisons.

The clergy were all penned up together in the cloisters of the Abbaye, whither they had been brought in carriages that morning. Among them was the Abbé Sicard, an admirable priest who had spent his whole lifetime in instructing the deaf and dumb in his own house, where

“The cunning finger finely twined
The subtle thread that knitteth mind to mind ;
There that strange bridge of signs was built where roll
The sunless waves that sever soul from soul,
And by the arch, no bigger than a hand,
Truth travelled over to the silent land.”

He had been arrested, while teaching his pupils, on the 26th of August 1792, and shut



King Louis visiting the Poor.

(From a study in tempera made by Gilbert James, after the painting by Hersent, at Versailles.)

up among other clergy in the prison of the Mayoralty ; but the lads whom he had educated came in a body to ask leave to claim him at the bar of the National Assembly. Massieu, his best scholar, had drawn up a most touching address, saying that in him the deaf and dumb were deprived of their teacher, nurse, and father. “It is he who has taught us what we know ; without him we should be as the beasts of the field.” This petition, and the gestures of the poor silent beings, went to the heart of the National Assembly. One young man named Duhamel, neither deaf nor dumb, from pure admiration of the good work, went and offered to be imprisoned in the Abbé’s place. There was great applause, and a decree was passed that the cause of the arrest should be inquired into ; but this took no effect, and on that dreadful afternoon M. Sicard was put into one

of a procession of carriages which drove slowly through the streets full of priests, who were reviled, pelted, and wounded by the populace till they reached the Abbaye.

In the turnkey's rooms sat a horrible committee, who acted as a sort of tribunal; but very few of the priests reached it. They were for the most part cut down as they stepped out into the throng in the court—consisting of red-capped ruffians, with their shirt sleeves turned up, and still more fiendish women, who hounded them on to the butchery, and brought them wine and food. Sicard and another priest contrived, while their companions fell, to rush into the committee-room, exclaiming, “Messieurs, preserve an unfortunate!”

“Go along,” they said; “do you wish us to get ourselves massacred?”

But one recognizing him was surprised,

knowing that his life was to be spared, and took him into the room, promising to save him as long as possible. Here the two priests would have been safe but for a wretched woman, who shrieked out to the murderers that they had been admitted, and loud knocks and demands for them came from without. Sicard thought all lost, and taking out his watch, begged one of the committee to give it to the first deaf mute who should come and ask for him, sure that it would be the faithful Massieu. At first the man replied that the danger was not imminent enough ; but on hearing a more furious noise at the door, as if the mob were going to break in, he took the watch ; and Sicard, falling on his knees, commended his soul to God, and embraced his brother priest.

In rushed the assassins. They paused for a moment, unable to distinguish the priests

from the committee ; but the two pikemen found them out, and his companion was instantly murdered. The weapons were lifted against Sicard, when a man pushed through the crowd, and throwing himself before the pike, displayed his breast, and cried, “Behold the bosom through which you must pass to reach that of this good citizen. You do not know him. He is the Abbé Sicard, one of the most benevolent of men, the most useful to his country, the father of the deaf and dumb !”

The murderer dropped his pike ; but Sicard, perceiving that it was the populace who were the real dispensers of life or death, sprang to the window, and shouted, “Friends, behold an innocent man. Am I to die without being heard ?”

“You were among the rest,” the mob shouted, “therefore you are as bad as the others.”

But when he told his name the cry changed. "He is the father of the deaf and dumb ! He is too useful to perish ; his life is spent in doing good ; he must be saved." And the murderers behind took him up in their arms, and carried him out into the court, where he was obliged to submit to be embraced by the whole gang of ruffians, who wanted to carry him home in triumph ; but he did not choose to go without being legally released, and returning into the committee-room, he learnt for the first time the name of his preserver, one Monnot, a watchmaker, who, though knowing him only by character, and learning that he was among the clergy who were being driven to the slaughter, had rushed in to save him.

Sicard remained in the committee-room while further horrors were perpetrated all

round, and at night was taken to the little room called Le Violon, with two other prisoners. A horrible night ensued; the murders on the outside varied with drinking and dancing; and at three o'clock the murderers tried to break into Le Violon. There was a loft far overhead, and the other two prisoners tried to persuade Sicard to climb on their shoulders to reach it, saying that his life was more useful than theirs. However, some fresh prey was brought in, which drew off the attention of the murderers, and two days afterwards Sicard was released to resume his life of charity.

At the beginning of the night all the ladies who had accompanied their relatives were separated from them, and put into the women's room; but when morning came they entreated earnestly to return to them, but Madame de Fausse Lendry was

assured that her uncle was safe, and they were told soon after that all who remained were pardoned. About twenty-two ladies were together, and were called to leave the prison ; but the two who went first were at once butchered, and the sentry called out to the others, " It is a snare ; go back ; do not show yourselves." They retreated, but Marie de Sombreuil had made her way to her father, and when he was called down into the court she came with him. She hung round him, beseeching the murderers to have pity on his gray hairs, and declaring that they must strike him only through her. One of the ruffians, touched by her resolution, called out that they should be allowed to pass if the girl would drink to the health of the nation. The whole court was swimming with blood, and the glass he held out to her was full of something red. Marie would not

shudder. She drank, and with the applause of the assassins ringing in her ears, she passed with her father over the threshold of the fatal gates into such freedom and safety as Paris could then afford. Never again could she see a glass of red wine without a shudder, and it was generally believed that it was actually a glass of blood that she had swallowed, though she always averred that this was an exaggeration, and that it had been only her impression before tasting it that so horrible a draught was offered to her.

The tidings that Mademoiselle de Sombreuil had saved her father came to encourage the rest of the ladies, and when calls were heard for "Cazotte," Elizabeth flew out and joined her father, and in like manner stood between him and the butchers, till her devotion made the crowd cry "Pardon!"

and one of the men employed about the prison opened a passage for her, by which she too led her father away.

Madame de Fausse Lendry was not so happy. Her uncle was killed early in the day, before she was aware that he had been sent for ; but she survived to relate the history of that most horrible night and day. The same work was going on at all the other prisons, and chief among the victims of La Force was the beautiful Marie Louise of Savoy, the Princess de Lamballe, and one of the most intimate friends of the Queen. A young widow without children, she had been the ornament of the court ; and clever, learned ladies thought her frivolous, but the depth of her nature was shown in the time of trial. Her old father-in-law had taken her abroad with him when the danger first became apparent, but as soon as she saw that

the Queen herself was aimed at, she went immediately back to France to comfort her and share her fate.



Since the terrible 10th of August the friends had been separated, and Madame de Lamballe had been in the prison of La Force. There, on the evening of the 2nd of September, she was brought down to the tribunal, and told to swear liberty, equality, and hatred to the King and Queen.

“I will readily swear the two former. I cannot swear the latter ; it is not in my heart.”

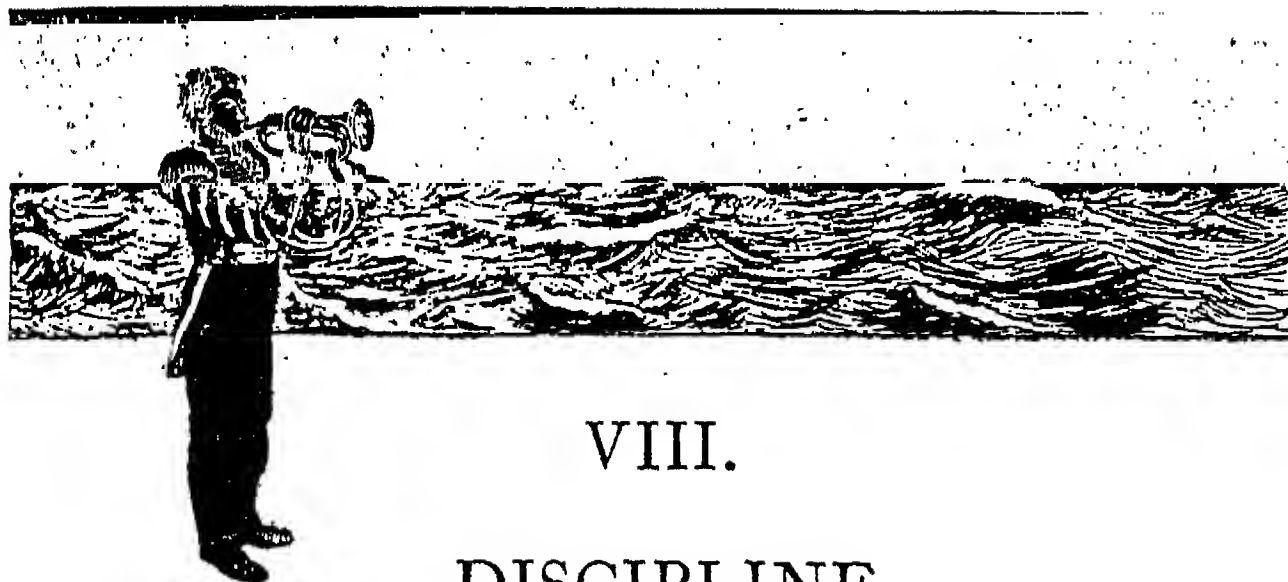
“Swear ! If not, you are dead.”

She raised her eyes, lifted her hands, and made a step to the door. Murderers closed her in, and pike thrusts in a few moments were the last “stage that carried from earth

to heaven” the gentle woman who had loved her queenly friend to the death. Little mattered it to her that her corpse was soon torn limb from limb, and that her fair ringlets were floating round the pike on which her head was borne past her friend’s prison window. Little matters it now even to Marie Antoinette. The worst that the murderers could do for such as these could only work for them a more exceeding weight of glory.

M. Cazotte was imprisoned again on the 12th of September, and all his daughter’s efforts failed to save him. She was taken from him, and he died on the guillotine, exclaiming, “I die as I have lived, faithful to my God and to my King.” And the same winter M. de Sombreuil was also imprisoned again. When he entered the prison with his daughter, all the inmates rose to do

her honour. In the ensuing June, after a mock trial, her father and brother were put to death, and she remained for many years alone, with only the memory of her past days.



VIII.

DISCIPLINE.

PERHAPS there have never been occasions when the habit of instantaneous obedience to the voice of duty has produced more touching instances of forbearance and unselfishness than in the confusion and despair of a shipwreck. What a wreck can be without such qualities has been but too well proved by the horrible scenes that took place after the loss of the French ship *Meduse*, when brutal selfishness was followed by savage violence and cannibalism too shocking to be dwelt upon, though memorable as an example that “every man for himself” is the most fatal of

all policies, even were self-preservation the primary object.

In British ships of war, unshrinking obedience, heeding nothing but the one matter in hand, is the rule. "As a landsman," says Colonel Fisher, an engineer officer, who was on board the *Plover* gunboat in the hottest fire on the Peiho River, "I was much struck with the coolness with which the navigation of the vessel was attended to: the man in the chains cries the soundings, the master gives his orders to the man at the helm and the engineers below; the helmsman has no eyes or ears but for the master's directions and signals. . . . All seem intent on what is their duty at the time being, and utterly unmindful of the struggle raging round them." And this when not only were they being shot down every moment, but when each comparatively harmless ball rocked the

gunboat, sent splinters flying, or brought the yards down upon their heads. Where such conduct is regarded as a mere matter of course, from the gray-headed admiral down to the cadet and the cabin-boy, no wonder that multitudes of deeds have been done, glorious because they placed duty far above self, and proved that Nelson's signal is indeed true to the strongest instinct of the English sailor.

The only difficulty is to choose among the instances of patient obedience on record ; and how many more are there, unknown to all but to Him who treasures up the record until the day when "the sea shall give up her dead !" Let us cast a glance at the *Atalante*, bewildered in a fog upon the coast of Nova Scotia, and deceived by the signal-guns of another ship in distress, till she struck upon the formidable reefs, known by

the name of the Sisters Rocks, off Sambro Island. The wreck was complete and hopeless, and a number of men scrambled at once into the pinnace ; but the captain, seeing that she could never float so loaded, ordered twenty of them out, and was implicitly obeyed, so entirely without a murmur that as the men hung clinging to the weather-gunwale of the ship they drowned the crashing of the falling masts with their cheers.

As soon as the pinnace was lightened, she floated off, but immediately turned bottom upwards. Still the crew never lost their self-possession for one moment, but succeeded in righting her, and resuming their places, without the loss of a man. They then waited beyond the dash of the breakers on the reef for Captain Hickey and their companions, who were still clinging to the remains of the

ship. There were two other boats, but too small to hold the whole number, and an attempt was made to construct a raft, but the beating of the waves rendered this impossible, so the men already in the pinnace were directed to lie down in the bottom, and pack themselves like herrings in a barrel, while the lesser boats returned through the surf to pick off the rest—a most difficult matter, and indeed some had to be dragged off on ropes, and others to swim, but not one was lost. The captain was of course the last man to quit the wreck, though several of the officers were most unwilling to precede him even for a moment; and by the time he reached the boat, the last timbers had almost entirely disappeared, amid the loud cheers of the brave-hearted crew.

Nothing was saved but the admiral's dispatches, which the captain had secured at



the first moment, and the chronometer. This last was the special charge of the captain's clerk, who had been directed always to hold it in his hand when the guns were fired, or the ship underwent any shock, so as to prevent the works from being injured. On the first alarm he had caught up the chronometer and run on deck, but being unable to swim, was forced to cling to the mizen-mast. When the ship fell over, and the mast became nearly horizontal, he crawled out to the mizen-top, and sat there till the spar gave way and plunged him into the waves, whence he was dragged into one of the boats, half-drowned, but grasping tight his precious trust. A poor merry negro, who held fast to his fiddle to the last moment, as he clung to the main-chains, was obliged to let his instrument go, amid the laughter and

fun of his messmates, who seem to have found food for merriment in every occurrence. No one had a full suit of clothes but an old quartermaster, named Samuel Shanks, who had comported himself throughout as composedly as if shipwrecks befell him every day, and did not even take off his hat, except for a last cheer to the *Atalante* as she sank. He recollected that he had a small compass seal hanging to his watch, and this being handed to the captain in his gig, and placed on the top of the chronometer, it proved steady enough to steer by, as the three boats crept carefully along in the dense fog. They landed after a few hours on the coast, about twenty miles from Halifax, at a fishing station, where they were warmed and fed.

Thence the captain took the most exhausted and least clothed of the party in the boats to Halifax, leaving the others to march

through the half-cleared country. Before night the whole ship's company assembled, without one man missing, in as complete order as if nothing had happened.

Here perfect discipline had proved the means of safety, and hope had never failed for a moment ; but we have still fresh in our memories an occasion where such forbearing obedience led to a willing self-sacrifice, when safety might have been possible to the strong at the expense of certain destruction to the weak.

The *Birkenhead*, a war steamer used as a transport, was on her way to Algoa Bay with about 630 persons on board, 132 being her own crew, the rest being detachments from the 12th, 74th, and 91st regiments, and the wives and children of the soldiers. In the dead of the night, between the 25th and 28th of February, the vessel struck on a reef

of sunken rocks on the African coast, and from the rapidity with which she was moving, and the violence of the waves, became rapidly a hopeless wreck. On the shock, the whole of the men and officers hurried on deck, and the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Seton, calling the other officers about him, impressed on them the necessity of preserving order and silence among the men, and placed them at the disposal of the commander of the vessel.

Sixty were placed at the pumps, others to disengage the boats, and others to throw the poor horses overboard, so as to lighten the ship, while the rest were sent to the poop, to ease the fore part of the ship. Every one did as directed, and not a murmur or cry was heard. They were as steady as if on parade, as ready as though embarking in a British harbour.

The largest boat was unhappily too much encumbered to be got at quickly enough, but the cutter was filled with the women and children, and pushed off, as did two other small boats. The other two large ones were, one capsized, the other stove in by the fall of the funnel, which took place immediately after the cutter was clear of the ship, only twelve or fifteen minutes after the ship had struck. At the same time the whole vessel broke in two parts, crosswise, and the stern part began to sink and fill with water. The commander called out, "All those that can swim, jump overboard and swim for the boats."

But Colonel Seton and the officers with him besought their men to forbear, showing them that if they did so, the boats with the women must be swamped. And they stood still. Not more than three made the

attempt. Officers and men alike waited to face almost certain death, rather than endanger the women and children. Young soldiers, mostly but a short time in the service, were as patiently resolute as their elders. In a few moments the whole of these brave men were washed into the sea, some sinking, some swimming, some clinging to spars. The boats picked up as many as was possible without overloading them, and then made for the shore, which was only two miles off, hoping to land these and return for more ; but the surf ran so high that landing was impossible, and after seeking till daylight for a safe landing-place, they were at last picked up by a schooner, which then made for the wreck, where thirty or forty were still hanging to the masts in a dreadful state of exhaustion.

A few, both of men and horses, had suc-

ceeded in swimming to the shore, but some were devoured by the sharks on the way, and out of the whole number in the ship only 192 were saved. But those who were lost, both sailors and soldiers, have left behind them a memory of calm, self-denying courage as heroic as ever was shown on battlefield.

